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1. POLICY

PUC Services Inc. [PUC] is committed to providing Accessible Customer Service to people with disabilities in a way that respects the dignity, independence, integration and equality for all people. The provision of services to persons with disabilities will be integrated wherever possible. Persons with disabilities, including those that use or need the use of assistive devices and/or support persons, will be given an opportunity, equal to that given to others, allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

2. LEGISLATION

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* [AODA] was created with the goal of developing standards that would improve accessibility for people with disabilities across the Province. The AODA allows the Provincial Government to develop specific standards of accessibility and enforce them. The standards were made into regulations pursuant to the AODA. This Regulation entitled, "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" established accessibility standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods or services to members of the public.

This policy is prepared in accordance with the Regulation and addresses the following:


- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- The use of assistive devices, service animals and/or support persons by persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities;
- Customer service training;
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- Staff and Third Party training; and
- Best practices and procedures for Customer Service.

3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all persons who deal with members of the public on behalf of PUC, whether the person does so as an employee, contractor, third-party, student on placement or otherwise.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Alternative Service** means a service generally intended to be temporary that approaches the desired result until such time as the barrier is removed or an equivalent service is put in place.
- 4.2 **Assistive Device** is a technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities.
- 4.3 **Barrier** means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his/her disability, including a physical barrier, and

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architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

- 4.4 **Contractor** means a company or person with a formal or informal contract to do a specific job on behalf of PUC.

5. Disability

- 5.1 Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- 5.2 A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- 5.3 A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- 5.4 A mental disorder; or
- 5.5 An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.
- 5.6 Service Animal is any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter from a registered health care professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- 5.7 Support Person is a person who accompanies a person with a disability, in order to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services.


6. PROCEDURE

PUC will provide goods and services to people with disabilities, with particular consideration to the following areas:

6.1 The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities:

PUC will use reasonable efforts, where possible, to ensure its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- (a) Goods and Services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- (b) The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from PUC and its affiliates goods or services; and
- (c) Persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the PUC's goods and services.

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6.2 Communication

When communicating to a person with a disability, PUC staff will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's current barriers. Staff will be trained on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

6.3 Training

PUC shall require that the following people receive training about the provision of its goods or services to people with disabilities:

- (a) Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of PUC, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise;
- (b) Every person who participates in developing PUC policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.


PUC shall provide training to its existing employees and will maintain records which will record the details of the training provided, as well as the name of the person, location, and date the training was completed.

PUC will provide training to new employees or employees who have transferred into a direct customer service position, as soon as practicable after he or she has been hired. This training will form part of the General Orientation Program. Training will also be provided on an on-going basis in connection with changes to applicable legislation, and/or PUC policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to person with disabilities.

Third party contractors who deal with the public or other third parties on behalf of the PUC shall ensure that their employees, agents, subcontractors, etc. receive training in accordance with this policy and the Accessible Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07. Contractors will be subject to a pre-qualification process whereby, prior to the commencement of any work under contract with PUC Services Inc., the Contractor shall declare it has read, understood and complied with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation 429/07 through the required training program. Contractors must provide proof of completion of the required training to PUC.

6.4 Accessibility Awareness Training

- (a) A review of the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
- (b) How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- (c) How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disabilities;
- (d) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- (e) The process for people to provide feedback about PUC's provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;

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- (f) What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing PUC goods and services;
- (g) PUC's Accessible Customer Service Policy and Procedures.

6.5 Notice of Temporary or Unexpected Disruptions in Service

In the event of a temporary or unexpected disruption of services, PUC will make a reasonable effort to provide notice of the disruption to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption and its anticipated duration.

Notice of the disruption may be provided to radio stations, Customer Service staff, after hours answering service, telephone voice messages and, whenever possible, by posting it on PUC website.

6.6 Feedback Process

Feedback from the public and/or employees is encouraged as it may identify areas that may require change and service improvement.

This policy will be reviewed every two years and amended as circumstances change.

Approved: *D. Parrella (Original on file)* _____
President/CEO

Date: *December 2015* _____

Revision History:

NOTE: A red line on the right side of document indicates a change		
Revision #	Date	Description
1	Dec 2015	Format change, no change to content
2		